



Uvalde lawmen arrest Treviño on murder rap



SUSPECT ARRESTED - Richard Ybarra Trevino (second from right) is escorted to Uvalde County Courthouse for arraignment Wednesday morning by Uvalde Police Department lieutenants Pete Arredondo and Fred Ratliff and Sergeant Mike Hernandez. (Staff photo by Margaret Palermo)

by Margaret Palermo - Staff writer

A traffic stop Tuesday for defective equipment resulted in the arrest of a suspect in the murder of Rosalinda Gomez, 59, of 416 W. Fannin St.

County Judge Bill Mitchell set bond at \$1 million Wednesday morning for Richard Ybarra Treviño, 29, who had been living with the victim. Treviño was Gomez's cousin, according to police.

Texas Department of Public Safety Sergeant John Harrell conducted the traffic stop at approximately 2:35 p.m. on Sgt. Joey Alvarez Drive near the cemetery.

"He called for a second trooper to assist him with a possible DWI suspect," said Interim Police Chief Ray Romo Tuesday afternoon.

"Lieutenant Fred Ratliff and I were on our way back to the office from the airport where we had just seen Detective Mike Hernandez off," said Romo. He explained that Hernandez was going to search area ranches courtesy of the U.S. Border Patrol helicopter.

"I told Fred let's go by and see if John needs anything," said Romo. "We pulled up and he had the driver of the car. I asked what he had and he said the driver appeared to be intoxicated and a front seat passenger who appeared to be intoxicated, but he wasn't sure."

Romo said the driver told them he had picked up the passenger in Eagle Pass after the passenger offered him

\$100 to bring him to Uvalde.

"I immediately was interested in who this passenger was because I've had this happen before. I walked over to the car and immediately recognized the suspect as our murder suspect," said Romo. "I called over Lt. Ratliff and told him our suspect was in the vehicle.

"He, Harrell and I pulled him out at gunpoint and arrested him for the murder of Rosalinda Gomez," said Romo.

Romo said Gomez's family members had filed a missing person report at approximately 9:15 a.m. Saturday with the Uvalde County Sheriff's Department, telling the deputies they suspected foul play.

According to police, family members said Treviño, who was living in Gomez's house, showed up at their residence in Gomez's red 1990 Geo Prism at about 8:15 a.m. Saturday and allegedly told them he had killed Gomez at the 416 W. Fannin St. residence and dumped her body in the river.

At first, family members reported, they did not believe Treviño. After he left their residence, they drove to Gomez's house to make sure she was all right.

"When they got there, they found Treviño and asked where Gomez was," said Romo. "Treviño first said Gomez was in the shower, but when they began to walk to the bathroom and were unable to locate her anywhere in the house, Treviño left in Gomez's vehicle," said Romo.

The vehicle Treviño took was a 1990 red 4-door Geo Prizm bearing Texas license plate YXJ05K belonging to Gomez. Romo said the vehicle still has not been found and Eagle Pass authorities have been alerted to keep an eye out for it.

Romo said family members called the sheriff's office to report the incident after Treviño left in the car.

Uvalde police officers went to 416 W. Fannin St. and discovered several items in disarray, Romo said. They also noticed a pair of wet jeans and boots on the front porch.

A search of the area rivers was conducted with the help of the U.S. Border Patrol, the sheriff's office, the Texas Department of Public Safety and Texas game wardens. The body was found at about noon Saturday in the Nueces River Crossing off Farm to Market Road 481 approximately eight miles south of Uvalde.

A nationwide alert was issued for Treviño Monday and police departments in San Antonio and San Angelo were notified of Gomez's murder.

"We believe she was murdered at her residence sometime Friday after 3 p.m. and before 8:30 p.m.," said Interim Police Chief Ray Romo. "Our preliminary autopsy results indicated that death was due to strangulation, but she was also severely beaten."

The autopsy is being done by the Bexar County Medical Examiner's Office.

"He's her cousin. This is what makes the crime most heinous," said Romo. "This lady, out of the goodness of her heart, had taken in this man when nobody else wanted him around because he had been causing trouble, and he killed her."

Romo said Treviño also allegedly stole some jewelry that belonged to Gomez. "He's nothing less than a cold-blooded killer," said Romo.

Detective Preston Kyle said Tuesday that Texas Rangers and U.S. Marshals helped in the search for Treviño. He said the U.S. Border Patrol also helped out. Kyle said all three agencies have resources not normally available to local police.

"Rosalinda Gomez was a 25-year employee of First State Bank," said Lewis E. Bracy Jr., First State Bank of Uvalde's chairman and chief executive officer. "She was a loyal and dedicated co-worker who will be greatly missed by all of us.

"Her loss is especially felt at this time of the holiday season," he added. "Our heartfelt condolences go out to her family and friends." Gomez had just been awarded her 25-year pin in April.